

SINCE Sir Winston Churchill appears once again to be heading the "Man of the Year" newspaper polls, I am using today to rescue a slip about Sir Winston and the Queen I heard at the time of the Coronation. I have never heard it since, but there is a ring of truth about it.

One of the ladies-in-waiting asked the Queen how she got on with Sir Winston.

"Very well," said Queen Elizabeth, "except for one thing. When the Prime Minister comes to see me at the Palace, often, in the middle of some discussion about State affairs, he looks at me and his eyes fill with tears and he runs out of words and we have to finish the discussion another day."

A NATO Magazine

AS my choice for "Man of the Year" is General Gruenther, Supreme Allied Commander, N.A.T.O., this seems the occasion to mention that, with his blessing, a lavish magazine dedicated to the cause of N.A.T.O. is to begin quarterly publication this month.

With contributions to the first number by General Gruenther.



General Alfred M. Gruenther.

Lord Ismay and Lord Tedder, it is said, he entitled "The Fifteen Nations" and will be printed in English and French by the Dutch firm of Perel, under the auspices of the Royal Netherlands Society, "Ons Lezer" (Our Army).

"The Fifteen Nations" will not be for sale, but will be distributed free to libraries, educational authorities and V.I.P.s.

A circulation of from 10,000 to 15,000 is planned and I wish it and General Gruenther a Happy New Year.

A Chair Vacated

IT is just over five years since Mr. Simon Nowell-Smith was appointed Librarian and Secretary of the London Library.

As he had never worked in a library before it might have seemed a capricious appointment; but in point of fact Mr. Nowell-Smith's influence has been everywhere beneficial, and it was I imagine, with considerable regret, that his committee recently heard of his intention to resign.

His own favourite souvenir of his stay at the Library will doubtless be the letter which began "Dear Sir, Please re-enter Dante's Inferno", but the initiative for

which he will be most gratefully remembered will probably be the foundation of the Carlyle Trust, by which sympathisers can make the resources of the world's greatest private library available to scholars less fortunate than themselves.

Mr. Nowell-Smith has expunged many of those anomalies which teased and infuriated lifelong library-users. Perhaps his successor may be bold enough to put the Lives of Goethe where they belong (under Biography) and under German Literature, where they have lain hidden for more than a century.

Camel Derby

THIS afternoon, Miss Pat Smythe is celebrating New Year's Day and her election as British Sportswoman of the Year by riding as a jockey in an invitation race at Algiers.

Three other renowned show-jumpers will be racing against her—Herr Winkler, the current world champion, Jonqueres d'Orléans, the French Olympic Gold Medalist, and the 1953 world champion, Papal Goyouet of Spain.

Their mounts will be chosen by lot just before the off.

At the Algiers Horse Show in April, Pat Smythe won prizes worth £200, in this time there will be nothing but a "booby-prize" for the winner and the also-rans in the shape of a second race—on camels.

The President of the Horse Show knows that "I've always wanted to ride a camel," Pat Smythe tells me, "and he has arranged a match race for us all across the Sahara. Heaven only knows what the rules will be!"

Spectre De La M.Y.D.

LAST Tuesday, my colleague, Richard Hughes attended the farewell performance at the Bolshoi Theatre of the Latvian Ballet Company.

This was the first occasion since their return from India and points East that Mr. Bulgakov and Mr. Khushchev have showed themselves at a public entertainment, and Hughes says they were in uproarious form, laughing and nudging each other and gaily pounding their hands in applause.

Mr. Malenkov backed them up jovially from behind, but at the end of the row, in the big scarlet and gold box of honour, Mr. Molotov appeared to be in a more pensive mood.

Perhaps, says Hughes, he was remembering that this was the same box in which, on one notable occasion, Lavrenti Beria failed to appear when the curtain went up.

A Simonon Ballet

BRITISH admirers of Georges Simonon must hope that the latest product of this marvellous author will be available to them as early as possible in the New Year.

It is not, for once, with a book that M. Simonon has knocked Paris sideways, but with a ballet, "La Chambre," which he has written for Roland Petit. This has been unanimously saluted as one of the most gripping and original entertainments in the history of ballet. Thriller-fans who normally find the ballet effete may be

reassured by the news that the principal character is a forthright inspector of Police and that the last agonies of the murderer's victim are as realistic as anything in a Clouzot film.

In calling on Georges Auric for the music, and on Bernard Buffet, that most inebriated of painters, for the décor, Roland Petit has kept well within the Parisian pack; but the male protagonist, Buns Miller, is, like M. Simonon, a recruit to the ballet. Arizona ranchman and former G.I., he has bravely contributed to the high wind of novelty which last week

blew through the Théâtre des Champs Elysées.

Parthésiaarch

DR. GILBERT MURRAY might, I suppose, be considered the greatest Oxford man since Matthew Arnold, and his nineteenth birthday, which falls tomorrow, will be kept with gratitude and affection by people all over the world who share his passion for liberty, justice, and truth.

One of his presents will be a bundle of advance copies of his new re-translation of Aristophanes, "Knights," which is due out in the middle of the month. I can say that it shows no falling off either in Dr. Murray's neat and exact wit or in his ability to move with the times. (A phrase about "talks with enemy agents on the sly" sticks in my mind.)

Dr. Murray never forgets the present, and in prefacing the work he speaks with admiration of "the high degree of 'parthésia,' or free speech, that was allowed in Athens even in the height of an exhausting war." If there is free speech in the modern world, it is to men like Dr. Murray that we owe it, and I imagine that

many people will be glad to follow the Duke of Edinburgh's lead in contributing to the Gilbert Murray 90th Birthday Fund, whose proceeds are to be devoted to furthering his own two lifelong preoccupations: Greek studies and international co-operation. (The address of the Fund: 25 Charles Street, London, W.1.)

Bachelor Comforts

MY recent note about the motor-car of the future has brought me a letter from Hollywood describing the Cadillac Eldorado owned by Mr. Hal Hayes, forty-

nine, a bachelor, and millionaire building contractor. Mr. Hayes's Cadillac is embellished with the following: refrigerator and cocktail bar; telephone; short-wave radio; dictaphone; water cooler; electric razor; shoe polisher, coffee-pot and toaster. The rear seats can be converted into a comfortable bed with dressing-slacks and a collapsible reading-room with shower attachment is stowed beneath.

Red Taptentry

IT looks as if Australia wins the Red Tape stakes for 1955. That excellent London publishing venture, Background Books, supplied an order from an Australian bookseller for two small display racks, value 10s. each. When the bookseller took delivery he was presented with the following bill.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|----|---|---|
| Duty | 8 | 2 | 6 |
| Wharfage and wharfage | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Cartage | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Customs Entries | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Stacking | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Light Entry | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Chopage | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Wharf Storage | 21 | 4 | 0 |
| Bond charges | 21 | 4 | 0 |
| Airport | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Dept. of Agriculture fees | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 25 | 1 | 6 |

The mysterious "cooperage" charge was for opening and repacking so that the wooden racks could be declared "free from borer." The Department of Agriculture fee was for inspection for this purpose. The charges mounted because of delay in issuing the import licence so that the bookseller was incurring bond charges while waiting.

The Human Treasure

AMOST interesting and, in this atomic age, perhaps the most stimulating piece of legislation introduced anywhere in the world last year was an amendment to the Japanese Cultural Property Protection Law.

This amendment gave birth to the concept of the "Human National Treasure," and resulted in the creation in Japan of the Important Intangible Cultural Property Act.

The object of this law is to pro-

tect traditional arts and crafts that are in danger of extinction, and to provide Government aid to those who ply them.

Things and People

In Great Britain, as in other countries, a measure of protection is provided for national monuments. The Japanese go further. They argue that unique things are only a part of the national heritage and that unique human beings and human activities are at least as deserving of protection from death and decay.

Among the dying Japanese crafts rescued with their crafts men since 1954 are 112 varieties of folk arts, 40 ancient industry techniques, the Bunraku Doll Theatre, Tokyo World Block Printing the Palace Dolls of Kyoto, and Hayashi (the accompaniment to



Tameji Ueno, a leading Japanese designer in Yuzen patterns. He was created an Important Intangible Cultural Property in 1955.

the Noh play) which has now been preserved by tape recordings. This highly commendable and imaginative law deserves serious study in the West.

No! No! Not That!

MR. JAMES SINGLAIR, the Canadian Minister of Fisheries was on a visit last month to Soviet shipyards.

While inspecting a shipyard in Siberia, Mr. Sinclair fell twenty-two feet from a scaffolding and seriously injured, was carried into the office of the yard manager. At his request, a doctor, whom he heard the manager going for the foreman held responsible for the accident.

"And if the Minister dies," threatened the manager, "you will be sent to Canada. They will know how to deal with you there!"